

RESULT 2

ABP97852

ID ABP97852 standard; protein; 173 AA.

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AC ABP97852;

XX

DT 03-JUN-2003 (first entry)

XX

DE Amino acid sequence of a human faxigen polypeptide.

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KW Human; faxigen; tumour necrosis factor receptor; TNF receptor;

KW transmembrane protein; obesity; hyperlipidemia; atherosclerosis;

KW insulin resistance; diabetes; hypertension.

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OS Homo sapiens.

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PN WO2003013583-A1.

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PD 20-FEB-2003.

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PF 08-AUG-2002; 2002WO-IB003528.

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PR 10-AUG-2001; 2001US-0311304P.

PR 04-DEC-2001; 2001US-0337128P.

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PA (GEST) GENSET SA.

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PI Lucas J, Dialynas D, Briggs K, Scalia A;

XX

DR WPI; 2003-256491/25.

DR N-PSDB; ABZ77531.

XX

PT Screening for an agonist or antagonist of faxigen activity for preventing

PT or treating an obesity-related disorder e.g., diabetes by identifying a

PT test compound that binds to the extracellular or intracellular domain of

PT faxigen.

XX

PS Disclosure; Page 45-46; 52pp; English.

XX

CC The present sequence represents a human faxigen polypeptide. Faxigen is a

CC member of the tumour necrosis factor (TNF) receptor family, and is a type

CC III transmembrane protein. The specification describes a method of

CC screening for an agonist or antagonist of faxigen activity. The method

CC comprises identifying a test compound that binds to the extracellular or

CC intracellular domain of faxigen. The method is useful for preparing a

CC composition for preventing or treating an obesity-related disease or

CC disorder, e.g., hyperlipidemia, atherosclerosis, insulin resistance,

CC diabetes or hypertension

XX

SQ Sequence 173 AA;

Query Match 100.0%; Score 980; DB 6; Length 173;

Best Local Similarity 100.0%; Pred. No. 3.1e-81;

Matches 173; Conservative 0; Mismatches 0; Indels 0; Gaps 0;

Qy 1 MDCQENEYWDQWGRCVTCQRCGPGQELSKDCGYGEGGDAYCTACPPRRYKSSWGHKQCS 60

|||||

Db 1 MDCQENEYWDQWGRCVTCQRCGPGQELSKDCGYGEGGDAYCTACPPRRYKSSWGHKQCS 60

Qy 61 CITCAVINRVQKVNCTATSNAVCGDCLPRFYRKTRIGGLQDQECIPCTKQTPTSEVQCAF 120

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Db          61 CITCAVINRVQKVNCTATSNAVCGDCLPRFYRKTRIGGLQDQECIPCTKQTPTSEVQCAF 120
Qy          121 QLSLVEADAPTVPPEATLVALEVCCSLRLIKQRRNLSSPCHPARRPVLSPK 173
           |||||
Db          121 QLSLVEADAPTVPPEATLVALEVCCSLRLIKQRRNLSSPCHPARRPVLSPK 173
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(54) Title: FAXIGEN AGONISTS AND ANTAGONISTS IN THE TREATMENT OF METABOLIC DISORDERS

(57) Abstract: The present invention relates to the field of metabolic research, in particular the discovery of compounds effective for reducing body mass and useful for treating obesity-related diseases and disorders. The obesity-related diseases or disorders envisioned to be treated by the methods of the invention include, but are not limited to, hyperlipidemia, atherosclerosis, insulin resistance, diabetes, and hypertension. In particular, the invention provides for methods of identifying and using AGONISTS and ANTAGONISTS of FAXIGEN activity, wherein said activity is selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity.

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FAXIGEN AGONISTS AND ANTAGONISTS IN THE TREATMENT OF METABOLIC DISORDERS.

Field of the Invention

5 The present invention relates to the field of metabolic research, in particular the discovery of compounds effective for reducing body mass and maintaining weight loss and useful for treating obesity-related diseases and disorders. The obesity-related diseases or disorders envisioned to be treated by the methods of the invention include, but are not limited to, hyperlipidemia, atherosclerosis, insulin resistance, diabetes, and hypertension. The present invention additionally
10 relates elsewhere to the field of metabolic research, in particular the discovery of compounds effective for increasing body mass and useful for treating disorders associated with excessive weight loss. Applicant reserves the right to exclude any of the aforesaid obesity-related diseases or disorders. The disorders associated with excessive weight loss and envisioned to be treated by the methods of the invention include, but are not limited to, cachexia, cancer-related weight loss, AIDS-
15 related weight loss, chronic inflammatory disease-related weight loss, and anorexia. Applicant reserves the right to exclude any of the aforesaid disorders associated with excessive weight loss.

In particular, the invention provides for methods of identifying and using AGONISTS and ANTAGONISTS of FAXIGEN activity, wherein said activity is selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity.

Background of the Invention

20

The following discussion is intended to facilitate the understanding of the invention, but is not intended nor admitted to be prior art to the invention.

Obesity is a public health problem that is serious, widespread, and increasing. In the United States, 20 percent of the population is obese; in Europe, a slightly lower percentage is obese
25 (Friedman (2000) Nature 404:632-634). Obesity is associated with increased risk of hypertension, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer as well as respiratory complications and osteoarthritis (Kopelman (2000) Nature 404:635-643). Even modest weight loss ameliorates these associated conditions.

Recently it was shown that particular carboxyl-terminal fragments of the full-length
30 ACRP30 (mouse) and APM1 (human) polypeptides have unexpected effects *in vitro* and *in vivo*, including utility for weight reduction, prevention of weight gain, and control of blood glucose levels (Fruebis et al (2001) Proc Natl Acad Sci USA 98:2005-10). The effects of ACRP30 fragment administration in mammals also include reduction of elevated free fatty acid levels including elevated free fatty acid levels caused by administration of epinephrine, *i.v.* injection of "intralipid",

or administration of a high fat test meal, as well as increased fatty acid oxidation in muscle cells, and weight reduction in mammals consuming a normal or high fat/high sucrose diet.

Throughout this application, various publications, patents and published patent applications are cited. The disclosures of these publications, patents and published patent specification
5 referenced in this application are hereby incorporated by reference into the present disclosure to more fully describe the state of the art to which this invention pertains.

Summary of the Invention

APM1 belongs to an expanding family of related secreted polypeptides that includes among others C2P, ZADJ-2 and ZADJ-7. These polypeptides have in common the structure: signal
10 peptide, N-terminally disposed unique region, collagen-like region, and globular C-terminal C1q homology domain. APM1, C2P, ZADJ-2 and ZADJ-7 further share an NGLXXD amino acid motif C-terminally disposed within the globular domain within a loop implicated in receptor binding, wherein said receptor is FAXIGEN. Fragments of APM1, C2P, ZADJ-2 and ZADJ-7 polypeptide comprising the globular domain are herein referred to as gAPM1, gC2P, gZADJ-2 and gZADJ-7. It
15 is further taken to be understood herein that LIGAND refers to a composition consisting essentially of or consisting of *in vitro* or *in vivo* self-assembling homotrimer comprised of gAPM1, gC2P, gZADJ-2, or gZADJ-7 polypeptide fragment.

FAXIGEN is a member of the Tumor Necrosis Factor Receptor Super Family (TNFRSF) and is a Type III transmembrane protein. The instant invention is based on FAXIGEN as receptor
20 for LIGAND that mediates effects, including utility for weight reduction, maintenance of weight loss, prevention of weight gain, increased insulin sensitivity, and control of blood glucose levels in humans and other mammals. These effects in mammals of FAXIGEN engagement by LIGAND also include reduction of elevated free fatty acid levels including elevated free fatty acid levels including elevated free fatty acid levels caused by administration of epinephrine, *i.v.* injection of
25 "intralipid", or administration of a high fat test meal, as well as increased fatty acid oxidation in muscle cells, and weight reduction in mammals consuming a normal or high fat/high sucrose diet. More specifically, the present invention is directed to FAXIGEN to which LIGAND binds and through which LIGAND mediates said effects.

In particular, the invention provides for methods of identifying and using AGONISTS and
30 ANTAGONISTS of FAXIGEN activity, wherein said activity is selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity, as well as to pharmaceutical and physiologically acceptable compositions comprising said FAXIGEN AGONISTS or ANTAGONISTS and methods of administering said pharmaceutical and physiologically acceptable compositions in order to increase or reduce body weight, maintain weight loss, or to treat obesity-
35 related diseases and disorders. Assays for identifying AGONISTS and ANTAGONISTS of obesity-related activity are also part of the invention.

Preferably said FAXIGEN AGONIST or ANTAGONIST is a compound selected from the group consisting of polypeptide, polypeptide fragment, peptide, proein, antibody, carbohydrate, lipid, small molecular weight organic compound and small molecular weight inorganic compound.

Preferably said FAXIGEN AGONIST or ANTAGONIST is a compound that selectively
5 binds to the extracellular domain of FAXIGEN.

In other embodiment, said FAXIGEN AGONIST or ANTAGONIST is a compound that selectively binds to the intracellular domain of a polypeptide comprising the extracellular domain of FAXIGEN.

The present invention also provides a method of assaying test compounds to identify a test
10 compound that binds to FAXIGEN polypeptide. The method comprises contacting FAXIGEN polypeptide with a test compound and to determine the extent of binding of the test compound to said FAXIGEN polypeptide. The method further comprises determining whether such test compounds are AGONISTS or ANTAGONISTS of FAXIGEN polypeptide. The present invention further provides a method of testing the impact of molecules on the expression of FAXIGEN
15 polypeptide or on the activity of FAXIGEN polypeptide.

The present invention also relates to diagnostic methods of identifying individuals or non-human animals having elevated or reduced levels of FAXIGEN products, which individuals are likely to benefit from therapies to suppress or enhance FAXIGEN expression, respectively, and to methods of identifying individuals or non-human animals at increased risk for developing, or present
20 state of having, certain diseases/disorders associated with FAXIGEN abnormal expression or biological activity.

The present invention provides for methods of identifying AGONISTS of FAXIGEN polypeptide biological activity comprising contacting a small molecule compound with FAXIGEN polypeptides and measuring FAXIGEN polypeptide biological activity in the presence and absence
25 of these small molecules. The present invention further provides for methods of identifying ANTAGONISTS of FAXIGEN polypeptide biological activity comprising contacting a small molecule compound with FAXIGEN polypeptides and measuring FAXIGEN polypeptide biological activity in the presence and absence of these small molecules. These small molecules can be a naturally occurring medicinal compound or derived from combinatorial chemical libraries.

30 The present invention also relates to pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable compositions comprising, an active agent, including AGONIST or ANTAGONIST of the present invention.

In a first aspect, the invention is directed to FAXIGEN AGONISTS, wherein said AGONIST is an antibody that specifically binds FAXIGEN, a compound excluding said FAXIGEN

antibody (e.g., small organic or inorganic compound, protein, peptide, carbohydrate, lipid), or a LIGAND polypeptide or fragment thereof.

In a further preferred embodiment, the invention is directed to a FAXIGEN AGONIST, wherein said AGONIST is an antibody that specifically binds FAXIGEN. More preferably the invention is directed to said FAXIGEN antibody, wherein said FAXIGEN antibody binds FAXIGEN and manifests LIGAND activity, wherein said activity is selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or described herein.

In a further preferred embodiment, the invention is directed to a FAXIGEN AGONIST, wherein said AGONIST is a compound excluding said FAXIGEN antibody. More preferably the invention is directed to said compound, wherein said compound binds FAXIGEN and manifests LIGAND activity, wherein said activity is selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or described herein. Further more preferably the invention is directed to said compound, wherein said compound manifests LIGAND activity exclusive of binding to FAXIGEN, wherein said activity is selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or described herein. Further more preferably the invention is directed to said compound, wherein said compound increases FAXIGEN expression.

In a further preferred embodiment, the invention is directed to a FAXIGEN AGONIST that selectively binds to a polypeptide comprising the extracellular domain of FAXIGEN.

In a further preferred embodiment, the invention is directed to a FAXIGEN AGONIST, wherein said AGONIST is LIGAND, and wherein it is understood that LIGAND refers to a composition consisting essentially of or consisting of *in vitro* or *in vivo* self-assembling homotrimer comprised of gAPM1, gC2P, gZADJ-2, or gZADJ-7 polypeptide fragment. More preferably the invention is directed to said LIGAND, wherein said LIGAND binds FAXIGEN and elicits biological activity, wherein said activity is selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or described herein. More preferably the invention is directed to said LIGAND, wherein said LIGAND induces, enhances, or potentiates said biological activity exclusive of binding to FAXIGEN. In preferred embodiment, said homotrimer is comprised of preferred gAPM1, gC2P, gZADJ-2 or gZADJ-7 polypeptide fragment.

APM1. Preferred gAPM1 polypeptide fragment is selected from amino acids 18-244, 34-244, 49-244, 56-244, 59-244, 66-244, 69-244, 78-244, 85-244, 93-244, 101-244, 102-244, 103-244, 104-244, 107-244, 110-244 or 113-244, wherein said numbering of said amino acids within APM1 amino acid sequence is understood to be taken from said APM1 amino acid sequence presented in Table 2. Less preferred gAPM1 fragments are indicated in bold.

C2P. Preferred gC2P polypeptide fragment is selected from amino acids 20-333, 25-333, 43-333, 45-333, 46-333, 50-333, 53-333, 61-333, 67-333, 74-333, 75-333, 77-333, 81-333, 82-333,

86-333, 89-333, 95-333, 100-333, 104-333, 113-333, 116-333, 125-333, 128-333, 140-333, 160-333, 164-333, 179-333, 182-333, 185-333, 188-333, 191-333, 193-333, or 202-333, wherein said numbering of said amino acids within C2P amino acid sequence is understood to be taken from said C2P amino acid sequence presented in Table 2. Less preferred gC2P fragments are indicated in
5 bold.

ZADJ-2. Preferred gZADJ-2 polypeptide fragment is selected from amino acids 16-285, 25-285, 26-285, 29-285, 30-285, 91-285, 93-285, 97-285, 98-285, 99-285, 105-285, 109-285, 112-285, 120-285, 126-285, 127-285, 130-285, 132-285, 133-285, 134-285, or 150-285, wherein said numbering of said amino acids within ZADJ-2 amino acid sequence is understood to be taken from
10 said ZADJ-2 amino acid sequence presented in Table 2. Less preferred gZADJ-2 fragments are indicated in bold.

ZADJ-7. Preferred gZADJ-7 polypeptide fragment is selected from amino acids 31-303, 39-303, 78-303, 81-303, 84-303, 85-303, 88-303, 91-303, 97-303, 99-303, 109-303, 117-303, 118-303, 127-303, 139-303, 142-303, 155-303, or 162-303, wherein said numbering of said amino acids
15 within ZADJ-7 amino acid sequence is understood to be taken from said ZADJ-7 amino acid sequence presented in Table 2. Less preferred gZADJ-7 fragments are indicated in bold.

More preferred LIGAND is APM1.

In a further preferred embodiment, said AGONIST is able to lower circulating (either blood, serum or plasma) levels (concentration) of: (i) free fatty acids, (ii) glucose, and/or (iii) triglycerides.

20 Further preferred AGONISTS are those that significantly stimulate muscle lipid or free fatty acid oxidation as compared to untreated cells. Further preferred AGONISTS are those that cause C2C12 cells differentiated in the presence of said AGONISTS to undergo at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 35%, or 40% more oleate oxidation as compared to untreated cells.

Further preferred AGONISTS are those that increase by at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 35%, or
25 40% leptin uptake in a liver cell line [preferably BPRCL mouse liver cells (ATCC CRL-2217)] as compared to untreated cells.

Further preferred AGONISTS are those that significantly reduce the postprandial increase in plasma free fatty acids or triglycerides, particularly following a high fat meal.

Further preferred AGONISTS are those that significantly reduce or eliminate ketone body
30 production, particularly following a high fat meal.

Further preferred AGONISTS are those that increase glucose uptake in skeletal muscle cells.

Further preferred AGONISTS are those that increase glucose uptake in adipose cells.

Further preferred AGONISTS are those that increase glucose uptake in neuronal cells.

Further preferred AGONISTS are those that increase glucose uptake in red blood cells.

Further preferred AGONISTS are those that increase glucose uptake in the brain.

Further preferred AGONISTS are those that significantly reduce the postprandial increase in plasma glucose following a meal, particularly a high carbohydrate meal.

Further preferred AGONISTS are those that significantly prevent the postprandial increase
5 in plasma glucose following a meal, particularly a high fat or a high carbohydrate meal.

Further preferred AGONISTS are those that improve insulin sensitivity.

Further preferred said AGONISTS are those that decrease body mass, wherein said decrease in body mass is comprised of a change in mass of the subcutaneous adipose tissue.

Further preferred said AGONISTS are those that decrease body mass, wherein said decrease
10 in body mass is comprised of a change in mass of the visceral (omental) adipose tissue.

In a second aspect, the invention features a pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition comprising, consisting essentially of, or consisting of, said AGONIST described in the first aspect and, alternatively, a pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable diluent.

In a third aspect, the invention features a method of reducing body mass comprising
15 providing or administering to individuals in need of reducing body mass said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition described in the second aspect.

In a fourth aspect, the invention features a method of preventing or treating an obesity-related disease or disorder comprising providing or administering to an individual in need of such treatment said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition described in the second
20 aspect. Preferably, said obesity-related disease or disorder is selected from the group consisting of obesity, insulin resistance, atherosclerosis, atheromatous disease, heart disease, hypertension, stroke, Syndrome X, Noninsulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (NIDDM, or Type II diabetes) and Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (IDDM or Type I diabetes). Diabetes-related complications to be treated by the methods of the invention include microangiopathic lesions, ocular lesions,
25 retinopathy, neuropathy, and renal lesions. Heart disease includes, but is not limited to, cardiac insufficiency, coronary insufficiency, and high blood pressure. Other obesity-related disorders to be treated by said FAXIGEN AGONIST of the invention include hyperlipidemia and hyperuricemia. In preferred embodiments, said individual is a mammal, preferably a human.

In related aspects, embodiments of the present invention includes methods of causing or
30 inducing a desired biological response in an individual comprising the steps of: providing or administering to an individual a composition comprising AGONIST, wherein said biological response is selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) lowering circulating (either blood, serum, or plasma) levels (concentration) of free fatty acids;

- (b) lowering circulating (either blood, serum or plasma) levels (concentration) of glucose;
- (c) lowering circulating (either blood, serum or plasma) levels (concentration) of triglycerides;
- 5 (d) stimulating muscle lipid or free fatty acid oxidation;
- (e) increasing leptin uptake in the liver or liver cells;
- (e) reducing the postprandial increase in plasma free fatty acids, particularly following a high fat meal;
- (f) reducing or eliminating ketone body production, particularly following a high fat meal;
- 10 (g) increasing tissue sensitivity to insulin, particularly muscle, adipose, liver or brain,

and further wherein said biological response is significantly greater than, or at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 35%, or 40% greater than that observed in the absence of treatment; or alternatively wherein said biological response is greater than a transient response; or alternatively wherein said biological
15 response is sustained. In further preferred embodiments, the present invention of said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition can be used as a method to control blood glucose in some persons with Noninsulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (NIDDM, Type II diabetes) in combination with insulin therapy.

In further preferred embodiments, the present invention of said pharmaceutical or
20 physiologically acceptable composition can be used as a method to control blood glucose in some persons with Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (IDDM, Type I diabetes) in combination with insulin therapy.

In further preferred embodiments, the present invention of said pharmaceutical or
physiologically acceptable composition can be used as a method to control body weight in some
25 persons with Noninsulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (NIDDM, Type II diabetes) in combination with insulin therapy.

In further preferred embodiments, the present invention of said pharmaceutical or
physiologically acceptable composition can be used as a method to control body weight in some
persons with Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (IDDM, Type I diabetes) in combination with
30 insulin therapy.

In further preferred embodiments, the present invention of said pharmaceutical or
physiologically acceptable composition can be used as a method to control blood glucose in some
persons with Noninsulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (NIDDM, Type II diabetes) alone, without
combination of insulin therapy.

In further preferred embodiments, the present invention of said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition can be used as a method to control blood glucose in some persons with Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (IDDM, Type I diabetes) alone, without combination of insulin therapy.

- 5 In further preferred embodiments, the present invention of said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition can be used as a method to control body weight in some persons with Noninsulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (NIDDM, Type II diabetes) alone, without combination of insulin therapy.

- 10 In further preferred embodiments, the present invention of said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition can be used as a method to control body weight in some persons with Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (IDDM, Type I diabetes) alone, without combination of insulin therapy.

- 15 In a further preferred embodiment, the present invention may be used in complementary therapy of NIDDM patients to improve their weight or glucose control in combination with an insulin secretagogue or an insulin sensitising agent. Preferably, the insulin secretagogue is 1,1-dimethyl-2-(2-morpholino phenyl)guanidine fumarate (BTS67582) or a sulphonylurea selected from tolbutamide, tolazamide, chlorpropamide, glibenclamide, glimepiride, glipizide and glidazide. Preferably, the insulin sensitising agent is selected from metformin, ciglitazone, troglitazone and pioglitazone.

- 20 The present invention further provides a method of improving the body weight or glucose control of NIDDM patients alone, without an insulin secretagogue or an insulin sensitising agent.

- In a further preferred embodiment, the present invention may be used in complementary therapy of IDDM patients to improve their weight or glucose control in combination with an insulin secretagogue or an insulin sensitising agent. Preferably, the insulin secretagogue is 1,1-dimethyl-2-(2-morpholino phenyl) guanidine fumarate (BTS67582) or a sulphonylurea selected from tolbutamide, tolazamide, chlorpropamide, glibenclamide, glimepiride, glipizide and glidazide. Preferably, the insulin sensitising agent is selected from metformin, ciglitazone, troglitazone and pioglitazone.

- 30 The present invention further provides a method of improving the body weight or glucose control of IDDM patients alone, without an insulin secretagogue or an insulin sensitising agent.

- In a further preferred embodiment, the present invention may be administered either concomitantly or concurrently, with the insulin secretagogue or insulin sensitising agent for example in the form of separate dosage units to be used simultaneously, separately or sequentially (either before or after the secretagogue or either before or after the sensitising agent). Accordingly, the present invention further provides for a composition of pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable

composition and an insulin secretagogue or insulin sensitising agent as a combined preparation for simultaneous, separate or sequential use for the improvement of body weight or glucose control in NIDDM or IDDM patients.

In further preferred embodiments, the present invention of said pharmaceutical or
5 physiologically acceptable composition further provides a method for the use as an insulin sensitiser.

In further preferred embodiments, the present invention of said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition can be used as a method to improve insulin sensitivity in some persons with Noninsulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (NIDDM, Type II diabetes) in combination with insulin therapy.

10 In further preferred embodiments, the present invention of said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition can be used as a method to improve insulin sensitivity in some persons with Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (IDDM, Type I diabetes) in combination with insulin therapy.

In further preferred embodiments, the present invention of said pharmaceutical or
15 physiologically acceptable composition can be used as a method to improve insulin sensitivity in some persons with Noninsulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (NIDDM, Type II diabetes) without insulin therapy.

In a fifth aspect, the invention features a use of AGONIST described in the first aspect for treatment of obesity-related diseases and disorders and/or reducing body mass. Preferably, said
20 obesity-related diseases and disorders are selected from the group consisting of obesity, insulin resistance, atherosclerosis, atheromatous disease, heart disease, hypertension, stroke, Syndrome X, Noninsulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (NIDDM, or Type II diabetes) and Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (IDDM or Type I diabetes). Diabetes-related complications to be treated by the methods of the invention include microangiopathic lesions, ocular lesions, retinopathy, neuropathy,
25 and renal lesions. Heart disease includes, but is not limited to, cardiac insufficiency, coronary insufficiency, and high blood pressure. Other obesity-related disorders to be treated by said AGONIST of the invention include hyperlipidemia and hyperuricemia.

In a sixth aspect, the invention features a use of AGONIST described in the second aspect for the preparation of a medicament for the treatment of obesity-related diseases and disorders
30 and/or for reducing body mass. Preferably, said obesity-related disease or disorder is selected from the group consisting of obesity, insulin resistance, atherosclerosis, atheromatous disease, heart disease, hypertension, stroke, Syndrome X, Noninsulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (NIDDM, or Type II diabetes) and Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (IDDM or Type I diabetes). Diabetes-related complications to be treated by the methods of the invention include microangiopathic lesions,
35 ocular lesions, retinopathy, neuropathy, and renal lesions. Heart disease includes, but is not limited to, cardiac insufficiency, coronary insufficiency, and high blood pressure. Other obesity-related

disorders to be treated by compounds of the invention include hyperlipidemia and hyperuricemia. In preferred embodiments, said individual is a mammal, preferably a human.

In a seventh aspect, the invention provides AGONIST of the first aspect of the invention, or a composition of the second aspect of the invention, for use in a method of treatment of the human
5 or animal body.

In an eighth aspect, the invention features methods of reducing body weight comprising providing to an individual said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition described in the second aspect, or AGONIST described in the first aspect. Where the reduction of body weight is practiced for cosmetic purposes, the individual has a BMI of at least 20 and no more than 25. In
10 embodiments for the treatment of obesity, the individual may have a BMI of at least 20. One embodiment for the treatment of obesity provides for the treatment of individuals with BMI values of at least 25. Another embodiment for the treatment of obesity provides for the treatment of individuals with BMI values of at least 30. Yet another embodiment provides for the treatment of individuals with BMI values of at least 40.

15 In further embodiment, the invention features methods of maintaining weight loss comprising providing to an individual said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition.

In a ninth aspect, the invention features the pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition described in the second aspect for reducing body mass and/or for treatment or
20 prevention of obesity-related diseases or disorders. Preferably, said obesity-related disease or disorder is selected from the group consisting of obesity, insulin resistance, atherosclerosis, atheromatous disease, heart disease, hypertension, stroke, Syndrome X, Noninsulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (NIDDM, or Type II diabetes) and Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (IDDM or Type I diabetes). Diabetes-related complications to be treated by the methods of the invention
25 include microangiopathic lesions, ocular lesions, retinopathy, neuropathy, and renal lesions. Heart disease includes, but is not limited to, cardiac insufficiency, coronary insufficiency, and high blood pressure. Other obesity-related disorders to be treated by compounds of the invention include hyperlipidemia and hyperuricemia. In preferred embodiments, said individual is a mammal, preferably a human. In preferred embodiments, the identification of said individuals to be treated
30 with said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition comprises genotyping LIGAND single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) or measuring LIGAND polypeptide or mRNA levels in clinical samples from said individuals. Preferably, said clinical samples are selected from the group consisting of blood, serum, plasma, urine, and saliva.

In a tenth aspect, the invention features the pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable
35 composition described in the second aspect for reducing body weight for cosmetic reasons.

In an eleventh aspect, AGONIST of the invention is used in methods of treating insulin resistance comprising providing to an individual said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition described in the second aspect, or AGONIST described in the first aspect.

In a preferred aspect of the methods above and disclosed herein, the amount of AGONIST administered to an individual is sufficient to bring levels of FAXIGEN activation to their normal levels (levels in individuals without obesity-related disease or disorder). "Normal levels" of FAXIGEN activation may be followed using surrogate markers including circulating (either blood, serum or plasma) levels (concentration) of: (i) free fatty acids, (ii) glucose, and/or (iii) triglycerides.

In a twelfth aspect, the invention is directed to a FAXIGEN ANTAGONIST, wherein said ANTAGONIST is a soluble fragment of FAXIGEN polypeptide, an antibody that specifically binds FAXIGEN, a compound excluding said soluble fragment of FAXIGEN polypeptide and said FAXIGEN antibody (e.g., small molecular weight organic or inorganic compound, protein, peptide, carbohydrate, lipid), or a variant or fragment of LIGAND polypeptide.

In a further preferred embodiment, the invention is directed to a FAXIGEN ANTAGONIST, wherein said ANTAGONIST is a soluble fragment of FAXIGEN polypeptide. More preferably the invention is directed to purified, isolated, or recombinant soluble fragments of FAXIGEN polypeptide. More preferably the invention is directed to said soluble fragment of FAXIGEN polypeptide, wherein said soluble fragment binds LIGAND and blocks LIGAND activity, said activity being selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or described herein, and wherein said soluble fragment of FAXIGEN polypeptide does not activate FAXIGEN. Preferably said soluble fragment of FAXIGEN polypeptide blocks or inhibits LIGAND binding to FAXIGEN. In preferred embodiments, said soluble fragment of FAXIGEN polypeptide comprises, consists essentially of, or consists of, at least 6 and not more than 136 consecutive amino acids of SEQ ID NOs: 2, 4, 6, 8, or 10, more preferably of amino acids comprising the extracellular domain of FAXIGEN. Preferred said soluble fragment of FAXIGEN comprises the extracellular domain of mature FAXIGEN polypeptide. Particularly preferred soluble fragment of FAXIGEN comprises amino acids 1-122, 2-122, 1-126, 2-126, 1-136 or 2-136 of SEQ ID NOs: 2, 4, 6, 8 or 10. Another particularly preferred soluble fragment of FAXIGEN comprises amino acids 1-122, 2-122, 1-126, 2-126, 1-136 or 2-136 of SEQ ID NOs: 12, 14 or 16. In other preferred embodiments, said soluble fragment of FAXIGEN polypeptide comprises an amino acid sequence at least 80%, 85%, 90%, 91%, 92%, 93%, 94%, 95%, 96%, 97%, 98%, or 99% identical to the corresponding consecutive amino acids of SEQ ID NOs: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 or 16. Further preferred embodiments include heterologous polypeptides comprising a FAXIGEN polypeptide of the invention. In further preferred embodiment, a FAXIGEN polypeptide of the invention is conjugated at its N- or C-terminus to an antibody Fc region or portion thereof.

In a further preferred embodiment, the invention is directed to a FAXIGEN ANTAGONIST, wherein said ANTAGONIST is an antibody that specifically binds FAXIGEN. More preferably the invention is directed to said FAXIGEN antibody, wherein said FAXIGEN antibody binds FAXIGEN and blocks LIGAND activity, said activity being selected from the group consisting of
5 lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or described herein, and wherein said FAXIGEN antibody does not activate FAXIGEN. Preferably said FAXIGEN antibody blocks or inhibits LIGAND binding to FAXIGEN.

In a further preferred embodiment, the invention is directed to a FAXIGEN ANTAGONIST, wherein said ANTAGONIST is a compound excluding said soluble fragment of FAXIGEN
10 polypeptide and said FAXIGEN antibody (e.g., small organic molecule, protein, peptide). More preferably the invention is directed to said compound, wherein said compound binds to FAXIGEN and blocks LIGAND activity, said activity being selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or described herein, and wherein said compound does not activate FAXIGEN. Preferably said compound that binds to FAXIGEN blocks
15 or inhibits LIGAND binding to FAXIGEN. Further more preferably the invention is directed to said compound, wherein said compound blocks or inhibits LIGAND activity exclusive of binding to FAXIGEN, said activity being selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or described herein, and wherein said compound does not activate FAXIGEN. Further more preferably the invention is directed to said compound, wherein
20 said compound blocks or inhibits FAXIGEN expression and wherein said compound does not have LIGAND activity, said activity being selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or described herein, and wherein said compound does not activate FAXIGEN.

In a further preferred embodiment, the invention is directed to a FAXIGEN ANTAGONIST,
25 wherein said ANTAGONIST is a variant or fragment of LIGAND polypeptide. More preferably the invention is directed to said variant or fragment of LIGAND polypeptide, wherein said variant or fragment of LIGAND polypeptide binds FAXIGEN and blocks LIGAND activity, said activity being selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or described herein, and wherein said variant or fragment of LIGAND polypeptide does not
30 activate FAXIGEN. Preferably said variant or fragment of LIGAND polypeptide blocks or inhibits LIGAND binding to FAXIGEN. More preferably the invention is directed to said variant or fragment of LIGAND polypeptide, wherein said variant or fragment of LIGAND polypeptide inhibits the induction, enhancement, or potentiation of said biological activity exclusive of binding to FAXIGEN.

35 In a further preferred embodiment, the invention is directed to a FAXIGEN ANTAGONIST that selectively binds to a polypeptide comprising the extracellular domain of FAXIGEN.

APM1. Preferred gAPM1 polypeptide fragment is selected from amino acids 18-244, 34-244, 49-244, 56-244, 59-244, 66-244, 69-244, 78-244, 85-244, 93-244, 101-244, 102-244, 103-244, 104-244, 107-244, 110-244, or 113-244, wherein said numbering of said amino acids within APM1 amino acid sequence is understood to be taken from said APM1 amino acid sequence presented in Table 2.

C2P. Preferred gC2P polypeptide fragment is selected from amino acids 20-333, 25-333, 43-333, 45-333, 46-333, 50-333, 53-333, 61-333, 67-333, 74-333, 75-333, 77-333, 81-333, 82-333, 86-333, 89-333, 95-333, 100-333, 104-333, 113-333, 116-333, 125-333, 128-333, 140-333, 160-333, 164-333, 179-333, 182-333, 185-333, 188-333, 191-333, 193-333, or 202-333, wherein said numbering of said amino acids within C2P amino acid sequence is understood to be taken from said C2P amino acid sequence presented in Table 2.

ZADJ-2. Preferred gZADJ-2 polypeptide fragment is selected from amino acids 16-285, 25-285, 26-285, 29-285, 30-285, 91-285, 93-285, 97-285, 98-285, 99-285, 105-285, 109-285, 112-285, 120-285, 126-285, 127-285, 130-285, 132-285, 133-285, 134-285, or 150-285, wherein said numbering of said amino acids within ZADJ-2 amino acid sequence is understood to be taken from said ZADJ-2 amino acid sequence presented in Table 2.

ZADJ-7. Preferred gZADJ-7 polypeptide fragment is selected from amino acids 31-303, 39-303, 78-303, 81-303, 84-303, 85-303, 88-303, 91-303, 97-303, 99-303, 109-303, 117-303, 118-303, 127-303, 139-303, 142-303, 155-303, or 162-303, wherein said numbering of said amino acids within ZADJ-7 amino acid sequence is understood to be taken from said ZADJ-7 amino acid sequence presented in Table 2.

Most preferred LIGAND is APM1 or C2P. Particularly most preferred LIGAND is APM1.

In a further preferred embodiment, said ANTAGONIST is able to raise circulating (either blood, serum or plasma) levels (concentration) of: (i) free fatty acids, (ii) glucose, and/or (iii) triglycerides.

Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that significantly inhibit muscle lipid or free fatty acid oxidation stimulated by its LIGAND. Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that cause C2C12 cells differentiated in the presence of LIGAND to undergo at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 35%, or 40% less oleate oxidation as compared to untreated cells.

Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that inhibit by at least 10%, 20%, 30%, 35%, or 40% the increase in leptin uptake stimulated by LIGAND polypeptide in a liver cell line [preferably BPRCL mouse liver cells (ATCC CRL-2217)] as compared to untreated cells.

Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that significantly increase the postprandial increase in plasma free fatty acids, particularly following a high fat meal.

Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that significantly increase ketone body production, particularly following a high fat meal.

Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that decrease glucose uptake in skeletal muscle cells stimulated by LIGAND.

5 Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that decrease glucose uptake in adipose cells stimulated by LIGAND.

Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that decrease glucose uptake in neuronal cells stimulated by LIGAND.

10 Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that decrease glucose uptake in red blood cells stimulated by LIGAND.

Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that decrease glucose uptake in the brain stimulated by LIGAND.

Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that significantly increase the postprandial increase in plasma glucose following a meal, particularly a high carbohydrate meal.

15 Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that significantly facilitate the postprandial increase in plasma glucose following a meal, particularly a high fat or a high carbohydrate meal.

Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that reduce the insulin sensitivity stimulated by LIGAND.

20 Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that increase body mass, wherein said increase in body mass is comprised of a change in mass of the subcutaneous adipose tissue.

Further preferred said ANTAGONISTS are those that increase body mass, wherein said increase in body mass is comprised of a change in mass of the visceral (omental) adipose tissue.

25 In a thirteenth aspect, the invention features a pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition comprising, consisting essentially of, or consisting of, said ANTAGONIST described in the twelfth aspect and, alternatively, a pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable diluent.

In a fourteenth aspect, the invention features a method of increasing body mass comprising providing or administering to individuals in need of increasing body mass said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition described in the thirteenth aspect.

30 In a fifteenth aspect, the invention features a method of preventing or treating disorders associated with excessive weight loss comprising providing or administering to an individual in need of such treatment said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition described in the thirteenth aspect. Preferably said disorder is selected from the group consisting of cachexia,

wasting, cancer-related weight loss, AIDS-related weight loss, chronic inflammatory disease-related weight loss, anorexia, and bulimia. Said disorders associated with excessive weight loss are comprised of those mediated by tumor necrosis factor (TNFalpha) alone, those mediated by TNFalpha plus one or more additional factors, and those mediated only by one or more factors
5 exclusive of TNFalpha. Said factors include, but are not restricted to, macrophage migration inhibitory factor, interleukin 1, and interleukin 6. In preferred embodiments, said individual is a mammal, preferably a human.

In related aspects, embodiments of the present invention includes methods of causing or inducing a desired biological response in an individual comprising the steps of: providing or
10 administering to an individual a composition comprising ANTAGONIST, wherein said biological response is selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) raising circulating (either blood, serum, or plasma) levels (concentration) of free fatty acids (FFA) or triglycerides (TG);
- (b) raising circulating (either blood, serum or plasma) levels (concentration) of glucose;
- 15 (c) raising circulating (either blood, serum or plasma) levels (concentration) of triglycerides;
- (d) inhibiting muscle lipid or free fatty acid oxidation;
- (c) inhibiting leptin uptake in the liver or liver cells;
- (e) increasing the postprandial increase in plasma free fatty acids, particularly following
20 a high fat meal; and,
- (f) increasing or eliminating ketone body production, particularly following a high fat meal;
- (g) reducing tissue sensitivity to insulin, particularly muscle, adipose, liver or brain,

and further wherein said biological response is greater than a transient response; or alternatively
25 wherein said biological response is sustained. In further preferred embodiments, the present invention of said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition can be used as a method of increasing body mass in some persons with cachexia, wasting, cancer-related weight loss, AIDS-related weight loss, chronic inflammatory disease-related weight loss, anorexia, and bulimia.

In further preferred embodiments, the present invention of said pharmaceutical or
30 physiologically acceptable composition further provides a method for the use as an insulin desensitiser, wherein the sensitivity of a cell or tissue to insulin is reduced.

In a sixteenth aspect, the invention features a method of making the FAXIGEN polypeptide described in the twelfth aspect, wherein said method is selected from the group consisting of

proteolytic cleavage, recombinant methodology and artificial synthesis. In a preferred embodiment, proteolytic cleavage is carried out using trypsin, plasmin, or collagenase.

In a seventeenth aspect, the invention features a use of ANTAGONIST described in the twelfth aspect for the preparation of a medicament for the treatment of disorders associated with excessive weight loss and/or for increasing body mass. Preferably, said disorder is selected from the group consisting of cachexia, wasting, cancer-related weight loss, AIDS-related weight loss, chronic inflammatory disease-related weight loss, anorexia, and bulimia. In preferred embodiments, said individual is a mammal, preferably a human.

In an eighteenth aspect, the invention provides ANTAGONIST of the twelfth aspect of the invention, or a composition of the thirteenth aspect of the invention, for use in a method of treatment of the human or animal body.

In a nineteenth aspect, the invention features methods of increasing body weight comprising providing to an individual said pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition described in the thirteenth aspect, or ANTAGONIST described in the twelfth aspect. Where the increase of body weight is practiced for cosmetic purposes, the individual has a BMI of no greater than 25 and at least 20. In embodiments for the treatment of disorders associated with excessive weight loss, the individual may have a BMI no greater than 20. One embodiment for the treatment of disorders associated with excessive weight loss provides for the treatment of individuals with BMI values of no greater than 15. Alternatively, for increasing the body weight of an individual, the BMI value should be at least 15 and no more than 20.

In a twentieth aspect, the invention features the pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition described in the thirteenth aspect for increasing body mass and/or for treatment of disorders associated with excessive weight loss. Preferably, said disorder is selected from the group consisting of cachexia, wasting, cancer-related weight loss, AIDS-related weight loss, chronic inflammatory disease-related weight loss, anorexia, and bulimia. In preferred embodiments, said individual is a mammal, preferably a human.

In a twenty-first aspect, the invention features the pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition described in the thirteenth aspect for increasing body weight for cosmetic reasons.

In a preferred aspect of the methods above and disclosed herein, the amount of ANTAGONIST administered to an individual is sufficient to bring levels of FAXIGEN activation to their normal levels (levels in healthy individuals). "Normal levels" of FAXIGEN activation may be followed using surrogate markers including circulating (either blood, serum or plasma) levels (concentration) of: (i) free fatty acids, (ii) glucose, and/or (iii) triglycerides.

Table 1 lists known or predicted biologic structural and functional domains for the FAXIGEN polypeptide of SEQ ID NOs: 2, 4, 6, 8 or 10 of the present invention, including the extracellular (EC) domain, transmembrane domain, and intracellular (IC) domain.

Table 2 lists the amino acid sequence of full-length APM1, C2P, ZADJ-2 and ZADJ-7 polypeptide. The total number of amino acids is given in parentheses. The predicted signal peptide is indicated in bold. The collagen-like region is indicated by dotted line. The region between the predicted signal peptide and the collagen-like region is the N-terminally disposed unique region. The globular C-terminal C1q homology domain is indicated by single underline. The NGLXXD amino acid motif C-terminally disposed within the globular domain is indicated by double underline.

It is taken to be understood that C2P herein encompasses variants comprising the substitution of valine for methionine at position 219 and/or the substitution of methionine for valine at position 301.

Structure of FAXIGEN Polypeptide

The full-length FAXIGEN polypeptide is comprised of at least 3 distinct regions including:

1. an extracellular domain comprising a LIGAND binding portion (and Cys-rich regions) and comprising amino acids from about amino acids 1-136 of SEQ ID NOs: 2, 4, 6, 8 or 10;
2. a transmembrane domain comprising amino acids from about amino acids 137-157 of SEQ ID NOs: 2, 4, 6, 8 or 10; and
3. a intracellular domain comprising amino acids from about amino acids 158-297, 158-299, 158-269, 158-231 or 158-198 of SEQ ID NOs: 2, 4, 6, 8 or 10, respectively.

Brief Description of Sequence Listing

SEQ ID NOs: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 or 15 are the nucleotide sequence of cDNA with an open reading frame which location is indicated as features. When appropriate, the locations of the potential polyadenylation site and polyadenylation signal are also indicated.

SEQ ID NOs: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 or 16 are the amino acid sequence of protein encoded by the cDNA of SEQ ID NOs: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 or 15.

The appended Sequence Listing is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

Detailed Description

Definitions

Before describing the invention in greater detail, the following definitions are set forth to illustrate and define the meaning and scope of the terms used to describe the invention herein.

The term "isolated" requires that the material be removed from its original environment (e.g., the natural environment if the material is naturally occurring).

The term "purified" does not require absolute purity; rather, it is intended as a relative definition. Purification of starting material or natural material to at least one order of magnitude, preferably two or three orders, and more preferably four or five orders of magnitude is expressly contemplated.

As used interchangeably herein, the term "polynucleotide(s)" include RNA or DNA (either single or double stranded, coding, complementary or antisense), or RNA/DNA hybrid sequences of more than one nucleotide in either single chain or duplex form (although each of the above species may be particularly specified).

The terms "complementary" or "complement thereof" are used herein to refer to the sequences of polynucleotides that are capable of forming Watson & Crick base pairing with another specified polynucleotide throughout the entirety of the complementary region.

The terms "polypeptide" and "protein", used interchangeably herein, refer to a polymer of amino acids without regard to the length of the polymer; thus, peptides, oligopeptides, and proteins are included within the definition of polypeptide. This term also does not specify or exclude chemical or post-expression modifications of the polypeptides of the invention, although chemical or post-expression modifications of these polypeptides may be included excluded as specific embodiments.

As used herein, the terms "recombinant polynucleotide" and "polynucleotide construct" are used interchangeably to refer to linear or circular, purified or isolated polynucleotides that have been artificially designed and which comprise at least two nucleotide sequences that are not found as contiguous nucleotide sequences in their initial natural environment. In particular, these terms mean that the polynucleotide or cDNA is adjacent to "backbone" nucleic acid to which it is not adjacent in its natural environment.

The term "recombinant polypeptide" is used herein to refer to polypeptides that have been artificially designed and which comprise at least two polypeptide sequences that are not found as contiguous polypeptide sequences in their initial natural environment, or to refer to polypeptides which have been expressed from a recombinant polynucleotide.

As used herein, the term "operably linked" refers to a linkage of polynucleotide elements in a functional relationship.

As used herein, the term "non-human animal" refers to any non-human animal, including insects, birds, rodents and more usually mammals. Both the terms "animal" and "mammal" expressly embrace human subjects unless preceded with the term "non-human".

The term "domain" refers to an amino acid fragment with specific biological properties. This term encompasses all known structural and linear biological motifs.

As used herein, the term "receptor" refers to a polypeptide to which a "ligand" binds and through which said "ligand" elicits a biological response comprised of biological activities. Said
5 receptor is preferably FAXIGEN of the present invention. Said "ligand" is preferably LIGAND of the present invention. By "receptor activation" is intended "ligand"-mediated alteration of said receptor polypeptide, wherein said alteration is selected from but not limited to the group consisting of receptor alterations associated with said biological response.

As used herein, the term "AGONIST" refers to naturally occurring and synthetic compounds
10 capable of inducing, enhancing, or potentiating a biological response comprised of biological activities.

As used herein, the term "ANTAGONIST" refers to naturally occurring and synthetic compounds capable of inhibiting a biological response, inhibiting the induction of a biological response, or inhibiting the potentiation of a biological response, wherein said biological response is
15 comprised of biological activities.

Without being limited by theory, the compounds/polypeptides of the invention are capable of modulating the partitioning of dietary lipids between the liver and peripheral tissues, and are thus believed to treat "diseases involving the partitioning of dietary lipids between the liver and peripheral tissues." The term "peripheral tissues" is meant to include muscle and adipose tissue. In
20 preferred embodiments, the compounds/polypeptides of the invention partition the dietary lipids toward or away from the muscle. In alternative preferred embodiments, the dietary lipids are partitioned toward or away from the adipose tissue. In other preferred embodiments, the dietary lipids are partitioned toward or away from the liver. In yet other preferred embodiments, the compounds/polypeptides of the invention increase or decrease the oxidation of dietary lipids,
25 preferably free fatty acids (FFA) by the muscle. Dietary lipids include, but are not limited to triglycerides and free fatty acids.

Preferred diseases believed to involve the partitioning of dietary lipids include obesity-related diseases and disorders such as obesity, insulin resistance, atherosclerosis, atheromatous disease, heart disease, hypertension, stroke, Syndrome X, Noninsulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus
30 (NIDDM, or Type II diabetes) and Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (IDDM or Type I diabetes). Diabetes-related complications to be treated by the methods of the invention include microangiopathic lesions, ocular lesions, retinopathy, neuropathy, and renal lesions. Heart disease includes, but is not limited to, cardiac insufficiency, coronary insufficiency, and high blood pressure. Other obesity-related disorders to be treated by compounds of the invention include hyperlipidemia
35 and hyperuricemia. Yet other disorders of the invention include disorders associated with excessive

weight loss such as cachexia, wasting, cancer-related weight loss, AIDS-related weight loss, chronic inflammatory disease-related weight loss, anorexia, and bulimia.

The terms "comprising", "consisting of" and "consisting essentially of" may be interchanged for one another throughout the instant application, although each retains its normal definition. The term "having" has the same meaning as "comprising" and may be replaced with either the term "consisting of" or "consisting essentially of".

Polypeptides of the Invention

Preferably, polypeptides of the invention are recombinantly produced using routine expression methods known in the art. The polynucleotide encoding the desired polypeptide is operably linked to a promoter into an expression vector suitable for any convenient host. Both eukaryotic and prokaryotic host systems are used in forming recombinant polypeptides. The polypeptide is then isolated from lysed cells or from the culture medium and purified to the extent needed for its intended use.

Consequently, a further embodiment of the present invention is a method of making a polypeptide, said method comprising the steps of

- a) obtaining a cDNA encoding said polypeptide;
- b) inserting said cDNA in an expression vector such that the cDNA is operably linked to a promoter; and
- c) introducing said expression vector into a host cell whereby said host cell produces said polypeptide.

In one aspect of this embodiment, the method further comprises the step of isolating the polypeptide. Another embodiment of the present invention is a polypeptide obtainable by the method described in the preceding paragraph.

The expression vector is any of the mammalian, yeast, insect or bacterial expression systems known in the art. Commercially available vectors and expression systems are available from a variety of suppliers including Genetics Institute (Cambridge, MA), Stratagene (La Jolla, California), Promega (Madison, Wisconsin), and Invitrogen (San Diego, California). In preferred embodiment, recombinant polypeptides of the invention are expressed in mammalian cells.

The invention is drawn, *inter alia*, to isolated, purified or recombinant polypeptides. FAXIGEN polypeptides of the invention are useful for increasing (ANTAGONISTS of FAXIGEN) body weight either as a cosmetic treatment or for treatment or prevention of diseases and disorders as discussed or described herein. FAXIGEN polypeptides are also useful *inter alia* in screening assays for AGONISTS or ANTAGONISTS of gene activity and for raising FAXIGEN-specific antibodies. When used for cosmetic treatments, or for the treatment or prevention of diseases,

disorders, or conditions, one or more FAXIGEN polypeptides can be provided to a subject. Thus, various fragments of the full-length protein can be combined into a "cocktail" for use in the various treatment regimens. LIGAND polypeptides of the invention are useful for reducing (AGONISTS of FAXIGEN) body weight either as a cosmetic treatment or prevention of diseases and disorders as
5 discussed or described herein.

The FAXIGEN polypeptides of the present invention are preferably provided in an isolated form, and may be partially or substantially purified.

Modifying FAXIGEN biological activity

Modifying endogenous FAXIGEN biological activity is expressly contemplated by the
10 present invention. The present invention further relates to compounds able to modulate FAXIGEN biological activity and methods to use these compounds. Such compounds may interact with FAXIGEN polypeptides directly or indirectly.

Candidate AGONISTS and ANTAGONISTS Obtained by Optical Biosensor Methods

Compounds interacting with a polypeptide comprising FAXIGEN extracellular domain can
15 be screened by using an Optical Biosensor as described in Edwards and Leatherbarrow (1997) and also in Szabo *et al.* (1995), the disclosures of which are incorporated by reference. This technique permits the detection of interactions between molecules in real time, without the need of labeled molecules. This technique, which is based on the surface plasmon resonance (SPR) phenomenon, is presented in more detail in Example 1.

Compounds Modulating FAXIGEN Biological Activity

20

Another method of screening for compounds that modulate FAXIGEN biological activity is by measuring the effects of test compounds on specific biological activity, wherein said activity is selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or as described herein, in a host cell. In one embodiment, the present invention relates to a method of
25 identifying an agent that alters FAXIGEN activity, wherein a nucleic acid construct comprising the polynucleotide of SEQ ID NO:1 or a fragment thereof encoding full-length FAXIGEN polypeptide is introduced into a mammalian host cell. The transfected mammalian host cells are maintained under conditions appropriate for expression of the encoded FAXIGEN, whereby the nucleic acid is expressed. The host cells are then contacted with a compound to be assessed (an agent) and an
30 activity of the cells is detected in the presence of the compound to be assessed, wherein said activity is selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or as described herein. Detection of a change in said activity for said transfected host cell, but not in untransfected host cell, in the presence of the agent indicates that the agent alters FAXIGEN activity. In a particular embodiment, the invention relates to a method of identifying an agent which is an
35 activator (AGONIST) of FAXIGEN activity, wherein detection of an increase of said activity, said

activity being selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or as described herein, in the presence of the agent indicates that the agent activates FAXIGEN activity. In another particular embodiment, the invention relates to a method of identifying an agent which is an inhibitor (ANTAGONIST) of FAXIGEN activity, wherein
5 detection of a decrease of said activity, said activity being selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or as described herein, in the presence of the agent indicates that the agent inhibits FAXIGEN activity.

Detection of a change in said FAXIGEN activity, said activity being selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, and insulin-like activity or as described herein, can
10 be performed using a variety of techniques as described for representative activities in Examples provided herein.

In a particular embodiment a high throughput screen can be used to identify agents that activate (enhance) or inhibit FAXIGEN activity (See e.g., PCT publication WO 98/45438, which disclosure is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety).

15 Methods of Screening for Compounds Modulating FAXIGEN Activity

The present invention also relates to methods of screening compounds for their ability to modulate (e.g. increase or inhibit) the activity or expression of FAXIGEN. More specifically, the present invention relates to methods of testing compounds for their ability either to increase or to decrease activity of FAXIGEN. The assays are performed *in vitro* or *in vivo*.

20 The present invention relates to a method for the screening of a candidate substance for interaction with a polypeptide comprising FAXIGEN extracellular domain, said method comprising the following steps:

- a) providing said polypeptide comprising FAXIGEN extracellular domain;
- b) obtaining a candidate substance;
- 25 c) bringing into contact said polypeptide with said candidate substance;
- d) detecting the complexes formed between said polypeptide and said candidate substance.

The invention further relates to a method for the production of a pharmaceutical composition comprising a method for the screening of a candidate substance that interact with a FAXIGEN
30 polypeptide, fragments or variants thereof and furthermore mixing the identified substance with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

The present invention relates to a method for the screening of a candidate substance for the capacity to increase expression of FAXIGEN, said method comprising the following steps:

- a) isolating mRNA from cells which have or have not been contacted with said candidate substance;
- b) carrying out a Northern blot analysis with labeled cDNA probe encoding all or part of FAXIGEN polypeptide;
- 5 c) wherein increased signal in cells having been contacted with said candidate substance over that of uncontacted cells is taken to indicate that said candidate substance increases expression of FAXIGEN and is an AGONIST of FAXIGEN activity; and
- 10 d) wherein decreased signal in cells having been contacted with said candidate substance over that of uncontacted cells is taken to indicate that said candidate substance decreases expression of FAXIGEN and is an ANTAGONIST of FAXIGEN activity.

Methods of isolating mRNA and carrying out Northern blot analysis are well known to those of ordinary skill in the art.

15 Preparation of Antibody Compositions

Substantially pure protein or polypeptide is isolated from transfected or transformed cells containing an expression vector encoding the FAXIGEN protein or a portion thereof. The concentration of protein in the final preparation is adjusted, for example, by concentration on an Amicon filter device, to the level of a few micrograms/ml. Monoclonal or polyclonal antibody to the
20 protein can then be prepared by methods well known to those of ordinary skill in the art.

Preferably the present invention includes monoclonal and polyclonal antibodies that specifically bind FAXIGEN polypeptide fragment comprising the extracellular domain of mature FAXIGEN polypeptide. Particularly preferred soluble fragment of FAXIGEN comprises amino acids 1-122, 2-122, 1-126, 2-126, 1-136 or 2-136 of SEQ ID NOs: 2, 4, 6, 8 or 10. Another
25 particularly preferred soluble fragment of FAXIGEN comprises amino acids 1-122, 2-122, 1-126, 2-126, 1-136 or 2-136 of SEQ ID NOs: 12, 14 or 16.

EXAMPLES

The following Examples are provided for illustrative purposes and not as a means of limitation. One of ordinary skill in the art would be able to design equivalent assays and methods
30 based on the disclosure herein all of which form part of the instant invention.

EXAMPLE 1: Use of Biacore Technology to Detect Specific Binding of a Test Compound to Polypeptide Fragment Comprising FAXIGEN Extracellular Domain

Biacore utilizes a biosensor technology for monitoring interactions between two or more molecules in real time, without the use of labels. The molecular classes than can be studied are

diverse, ranging from proteins, peptides, nucleic acids, carbohydrates, and lipids to low molecular weight substances and pharmaceuticals.

The detection principle is based on the optical phenomena of surface plasmon resonance, which detects changes in refractive index close to a biosensor surface. In a typical experiment one of the interacting molecules is immobilized or captured (here, polypeptide fragment comprising FAXIGEN extracellular domain) to a flexible dextran layer close to the sensor surface. The interacting partner (here, test compound) is flowed across that surface. If an interaction occurs between the two molecules, there is a resulting increase in signal due to the increase in mass at the chip surface.

10 Soluble polypeptide fragment comprising FAXIGEN extracellular domain is attached to the sensor surface via amine coupling chemistry. The dextran is activated using N-hydroxysuccinimide and N-ethyl-N'-(3-dimethylaminopropyl)-carbodiimide hydrochloride for 7 minutes. Said FAXIGEN polypeptide fragment is diluted in 10mM Na Acetate pH 5.0 at a concentration of 10µg/ml and injected over the activated surface for 7 minutes. The surface is then blocked for 7 minutes using ethanolamine to remove any remaining esters. A blank flow cell absent said FAXIGEN polypeptide fragment is set up in parallel and used as a control surface. The running buffer is HBS-EP (0.01M HEPES pH 7.4, 0.15M NaCl, 3mM EDTA, 0.005% Surfactant P20) and the instrument temperature is 25°C.

20 The test compound is filtered through an Ultrafree-0.5 Centrifugal Filter Device and resuspended in HBS-EP running buffer. The test compound is then diluted 1:10 in HBS-EP and injected over the said FAXIGEN polypeptide fragment surface and the blank control surface for 1 minute at a flow rate of 50 µl/min. The sensorgrams from the receptor surface and the control surface are aligned and overlaid.

To obtain the specific binding, the control surface was subtracted from the active surface comprised of said FAXIGEN polypeptide fragment.

Example 2: Effect of LIGAND on Muscle Cell Fatty Acid Oxidation

C2C12 cells are differentiated in the presence or absence of 2 µg/mL LIGAND for 4 days. On day 4, oleate oxidation rates are determined by measuring conversion of 1-¹⁴C-oleate (0.2 mM) to ¹⁴CO₂ for 90 min. This experiment can be used to screen for active polypeptides and peptides as well as AGONISTS and ANTAGONISTS or activators and inhibitors of LIGAND receptor.

30 The effect of LIGAND on the rate of oleate oxidation can be compared in differentiated C2C12 cells (murine skeletal muscle cells; ATCC, Manassas, VA CRL-1772) and in a hepatocyte cell line (Hepa1-6; ATCC, Manassas, VA CRL-1830). Cultured cells are maintained according to manufacturer's instructions. The oleate oxidation assay is performed as previously described (Muoio et al (1999) Biochem J 338;783-791). Briefly, nearly confluent myocytes are kept in low serum differentiation media (DMEM, 2.5% Horse serum) for 4 days, at which time formation of

myotubes became maximal. Hepatocytes are kept in the same DMEM medium supplemented with 10% FCS for 2 days. One hour prior to the experiment the media is removed and 1 mL of preincubation media (MEM, 2.5% Horse serum, 3 mM glucose, 4 mM Glutamine, 25 mM Hepes, 1% FFA free BSA, 0.25 mM Oleate, 5 µg/mL gentamycin) is added. At the start of the oxidation experiment ¹⁴C-Oleic acid (1µCi/mL, American Radiolabelled Chemical Inc., St. Louis, MO) is added and cells are incubated for 90 min at 37°C in the absence/presence of 2.5 µg/mL LIGAND. After the incubation period 0.75 mL of the media is removed and assayed for ¹⁴C-oxidation products as described below for the muscle FFA oxidation experiment.

EXAMPLE 3: Effect of LIGAND on *In Vitro* Glucose Uptake by Muscle Cells

- 10 L6 Muscle cells are obtained from the European Culture Collection (Porton Down) and are used at passages 7-11. Cells are maintained in standard tissue culture medium DMEM, and glucose uptake is assessed using [³H]-2-deoxyglucose (2DG) with or without LIGAND in the presence or absence of insulin (10⁻⁸ M) as has been previously described (Walker, P.S. et al. (1990) Glucose transport activity in L6 muscle cells is regulated by the coordinate control of subcellular glucose transporter distribution, biosynthesis, and mRNA transcription. JBC 265(3):1516-1523; and Kilp, A. et al. (1992) Stimulation of hexose transport by metformin in L6 muscle cells in culture. Endocrinology 130(5):2535-2544, which disclosures are hereby incorporated by reference in their entireties). Uptake of 2DG is expressed as the percentage change compared with control (no added insulin or LIGAND). Values are presented as mean ± SEM of sets of 4 wells per experiment.
- 20 Differences between sets of wells are evaluated by Student's t test, probability values p<0.05 are considered to be significant.

EXAMPLE 4: Effect of LIGAND on Mice Fed a High-Fat Diet

- Experiments are performed using approximately 6 week old C57Bl/6 mice (8 per group). All mice are housed individually. The mice are maintained on a high fat diet throughout each experiment. The high fat diet (cafeteria diet; D12331 from Research Diets, Inc.) has the following composition: protein kcal% 16, sucrose kcal% 26, and fat kcal% 58. The fat is primarily composed of coconut oil, hydrogenated.

- After the mice are fed a high fat diet for 6 days, micro-osmotic pumps are inserted using isoflurane anesthesia, and are used to provide LIGAND, saline, and an irrelevant peptide to the mice subcutaneously (s.c.) for 18 days. LIGAND is provided at doses of 100, 50, 25, and 2.5 µg/day and the irrelevant peptide is provided at 10 µg/day. Body weight is measured on the first, third and fifth day of the high fat diet, and then daily after the start of treatment. Final blood samples are taken by cardiac puncture and are used to determine triglyceride (TG), total cholesterol (TC), glucose, leptin, and insulin levels. The amount of food consumed per day is also determined for each group.

EXAMPLE 5: Effect of LIGAND on Plasma Free Fatty Acid in C57 BL/6 Mice

The effect of LIGAND on postprandial lipemia (PPL) in normal C57BL/6J mice is tested.

The mice used in this experiment are fasted for 2 hours prior to the experiment after which a

baseline blood sample is taken. All blood samples are taken from the tail using EDTA coated capillary tubes (50 μ L each time point). At time 0 (8:30 AM), a standard high fat meal (6g butter, 6 g sunflower oil, 10 g nonfat dry milk, 10 g sucrose, 12 mL distilled water prepared fresh following Nb#6, JF, pg.1) is given by gavage (vol.=1% of body weight) to all animals.

- 5 Immediately following the high fat meal, 25 μ g a LIGAND is injected i.p. in 100 μ L saline. The same dose (25 μ g/mL in 100 μ L) is again injected at 45 min and at 1 hr 45 min. Control animals are injected with saline (3x100 μ L). Untreated and treated animals are handled in an alternating mode.

- Blood samples are taken in hourly intervals, and are immediately put on ice. Plasma is
10 prepared by centrifugation following each time point. Plasma is kept at -20°C and free fatty acids (FFA), triglycerides (TG) and glucose are determined within 24 hours using standard test kits (Sigma and Wako). Due to the limited amount of plasma available, glucose is determined in duplicate using pooled samples. For each time point, equal volumes of plasma from all 8 animals per treatment group are pooled.

15 EXAMPLE 6: Effect of LIGAND on Plasma FFA, TG and Glucose in C57 BL/6 Mice

- Briefly, 14 mice re fasted for 2 hours prior to the experiment after which a baseline blood sample is taken. All blood samples are taken from the tail using EDTA coated capillary tubes (50 μ L each time point). At time 0 (9:00AM), a standard high fat meal (see Example 6) is given by gavage (vol.=1% of body weight) to all animals. Immediately following the high fat meal, 4 mice
20 are injected 25 μ g of LIGAND i.p. in 100 μ L saline. The same dose (25 μ g in 100 μ L) is again injected at 45 min and at 1 hr 45 min. A second treatment group receives 3 times 50 μ g LIGAND at the same intervals. Control animals are injected with saline (3x100 μ L). Untreated and treated animals are handled in an alternating mode.

- Blood samples are immediately put on ice. Plasma is prepared by centrifugation following
25 each time point. Plasma is kept at -20 °C and free fatty acids (FFA), triglycerides (TG) and glucose are determined within 24 hours using standard test kits (Sigma and Wako).

EXAMPLE 7: Effect of LIGAND on FFA following Epinephrine Injection

- In mice, plasma free fatty acids increase after intragastric administration of a high fat/sucrose test meal. These free fatty acids are mostly produced by the activity of lipolytic enzymes
30 i.e. lipoprotein lipase (LPL) and hepatic lipase (HL). In this species, these enzymes are found in significant amounts both bound to endothelium and freely circulating in plasma. Another source of plasma free fatty acids is hormone sensitive lipase (HSL) that releases free fatty acids from adipose tissue after β -adrenergic stimulation. To test whether LIGAND also regulates the metabolism of free fatty acid released by HSL, mice are injected with epinephrine.

- 35 Two groups of mice are given epinephrine (5 μ g) by intraperitoneal injection. A treated group is injected with a LIGAND (25 μ g) one hour before and again together with epinephrine, while control animals receive saline. Plasma is isolated and free fatty acids and glucose are measured.

EXAMPLE 8: Effect of LIGAND on FFA following Intralipid Injection

Two groups of mice are intravenously (tail vein) injected with 30 μ L bolus of Intralipid-20% (Clintec) to generate a sudden rise in plasma FFAs, thus by-passing intestinal absorption. (Intralipid is an intravenous fat emulsion used in nutritional therapy). A treated group (LIGAND-treated) is injected with LIGAND (25 μ g) at 30 and 60 minutes before Intralipid is given, while control animals receive saline. Plasma is isolated and FFAs are measured as described previously. The effect of LIGAND on the decay in plasma FFAs following the peak induced by Intralipid injection is then monitored.

EXAMPLE 9: Effect of LIGAND on Weight Gain and Weight Loss of Mice and on Maintenance of**10 Weight Loss in Mice**

In the first experiment, 10-week-old male C57BL/6J mice are put on a very high fat/sucrose purified diet for 19 days to promote weight gain; the average body weight at this time is 30g. The mice are then surgically implanted with an osmotic pump (Alzet, Newark, DE) delivering either 2.5 μ g/day of LIGAND or physiological saline. The mice are continued on the high fat diet and their body weight was recorded over the following 10-day period.

Weight gain by mice treated with saline in contradistinction to weight loss by mice treated with LIGAND is taken as evidence that in this inbred strain of normal mice, a continuous infusion of a daily low dose of LIGAND can prevent weight gain caused by high fat/sucrose feeding, in a sustainable way.

20 Data are expressed throughout as mean \pm SEM; a p-value < 0.05 is considered statistically significant. Statistical analysis is typically done using either the unpaired Student's t test or the paired Student's t test.

Maintenance of weight loss in mice

In order to demonstrate the ability of LIGAND to maintain weight loss, normal mice are put on a reduced calorie diet to promote weight loss. The reduced calorie diet is continued until the mice lose 10% of their initial weight. A second group of mice are continued on the reduced calorie diet until the mice lose 20% of their initial weight. The mice are then surgically implanted with an osmotic pump (Alzet, Newark, DE) delivering either 2.5 μ g/day of LIGAND or physiological saline. The mice are returned to a normal diet and their body weights are recorded over a 10-day period. After 10 days, the outcome wherein mice treated with LIGAND have a lower weight than mice treated with saline is taken to provide evidence that treatment with LIGAND promotes the maintenance of weight loss.

EXAMPLE 10: Assessment of homotrimer formation by gAPM1, gC2P, gZADJ-2 or gZADJ-7 polypeptide fragment.

35 Homotrimer formation by gAPM1, gC2P, gZADJ-2 or gZADJ-7 polypeptide fragment is assessed using sedimentation equilibrium in analytical centrifuges, a method that determines molecular weight accurately and independently of other physical factors such as shape.

Candidate gAPM1, gC2P, gZADJ-2 or gZADJ-7 polypeptide fragment homotrimer is purified, for example using a protocol comprising a method of gel filtration such as 16/60 superdex 200 gel filtration column (Amersham). Said purified candidate gAPM1, gC2P, gZADJ-2 or gZADJ-7 polypeptide fragment homotrimer protein concentration is made 3 μ M in 5.7 mM phosphate (pH 7.5), 137 mM NaCl, 2.7 mM KCl. Samples are centrifuged at 8,000 rpm for 18 hours at 10°C in a Beckman XL-A analytical ultracentrifuge before absorbance is recorded. The data are fit globally, using MacNonlin PPC [Johnson ML et al., Biophys J (1981) 36:575-8; Schuster TM et al., Curr Opin Struct Biol (1996) 6:650-8; Hensley P, Structure (1996) 4:367-73; the disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety] to the following equation that describes the sedimentation of a homogeneous species: $Abs = B + A' \exp[H \times M (x^2 - x_0^2)]$ where Abs = absorbance at radius x, A' = absorbance at reference radius x_0 , $H = (1 - v\rho)\omega^2/2RT$, R = gas constant, T = temperature in Kelvin, v = partial specific volume = 0.71896131 mL/g, ρ = density of solvent = 1.0061 g/mL, ω = angular velocity in radians/s, M = apparent molecular weight, and B = solvent absorbance (blank).

TABLE 1

Amino Acid Residues Comprising the Structural Domains of FAXIGEN

SEQ ID NOs: 2, 4, 6, 8 or 10 Description

SEQ ID NO:	EC DOMAIN	TRANSMEMBRANE DOMAIN	IC DOMAIN
2	1-136	137-157	158-297
4	1-136	137-157	158-299
6	1-136	137-157	158-269
8	1-136	137-157	158-231
10	1-136	137-157	158-198

5

EC, extracellular domain; IC, intracellular domain

TABLE 2

APM1, C2P, ZADJ-2 and ZADJ-7

5 >APM1 polypeptide sequence:

MLLLGAVLLLLLALPGHDQETTTQGPVLLPLPKGACTGWMAGIPGHPGHNGAPGRDGRD
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YVTIPNMPIRFTKIFYNQONHYDGSTGKFHCNIPGLYYFAYHITVYMKDVKVSLFKKDKAM
LFTYDQYOENNVDDQASGSVLLHLEVGDQVWLQVYGEGERNGLYADNDNDSTFTGFLLYH

10 DTN (244)

> C2P polypeptide sequence:

MRIWWLLLAIEICTGNINSQDTCRQGHPIPGNPGHNLPGRDGRDGAKGDKGDAGEPG
 RPGSPGKDGTSGEKGGERGADGKVEAKGIKGDQSGRSPGKHGPKGLAGPMGEKGLRGETG
 15 PQGQKGNGKGDVGPTGPEGPRGNIGPLGPTGLPGMPGPKGPKGEAGPTGPQGEVGRGIR
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HIAGVYYFTYHITVFSRNVQVSLVKNQVKILHTKDAYMSEDOASGGIVLQKLGDDEVWLO
VTGGERFNGLEADEDDDTTFTGFLLFSSP (333)

20 >ZADJ-2 polypeptide sequence:

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 25 QGDDEVWLOIFYSEONGLEFYDPYWTDSLFTGFLIYADQDDPNEV (285)

>ZADJ-7 polypeptide sequence:

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STVIYLOPEDEVWLEIFFTDONGLESDDPGWADSLFSGFLLYVDIDYLDSEDEDEL (303)

What is claimed is:

1. A method of screening for an AGONIST or an ANTAGONIST of FAXIGEN activity.
- 5 2. The method of Claim 1, wherein said activity is selected from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, insulin-like activity, free fatty acid oxidation, and weight reduction.
3. An AGONIST or an ANTAGONIST of FAXIGEN activity.
4. The AGONIST or the ANTAGONIST of Claim 3, wherein said activity is selected
10 from the group consisting of lipid partitioning, lipid metabolism, insulin-like activity, free fatty acid oxidation, and weight reduction.
5. A pharmaceutical or physiologically acceptable composition comprising, consisting essentially of, or consisting of the AGONIST or the ANTAGONIST of Claim 3.
6. A method of preventing or treating an obesity-related disease or disorder comprising
15 providing or administering to an individual in need of such treatment the composition of Claim 5.

SEQUENCE LISTING

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agc ctg cta gtg gtg ttt acc ctg gcc ttc ctg ggg ctc ttc ttc ctc	480		
Ser Leu Leu Val Val Phe Thr Leu Ala Phe Leu Gly Leu Phe Phe Leu			
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Tyr Cys Lys Gln Phe Phe Asn Arg His Cys Gln Arg Gly Gly Leu Leu			
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210 215 220			
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<220>
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 Gln Phe Glu Ala Asp Lys Thr Ala Lys Glu Glu Ser Leu Phe Pro Val
 180 185 190
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 195 200 205
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Tyr	Lys	Ser	Ser	Trp	Gly	His	His	Lys	Cys	Gln	Ser	Cys	Ile	Thr	Cys		
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agc	ctg	cta	gtg	gtg	ttt	acc	ctg	gcc	ttc	ctg	ggg	ctc	ttc	ttc	ctc	480	
Ser	Leu	Leu	Val	Val	Phe	Thr	Leu	Ala	Phe	Leu	Gly	Leu	Phe	Phe	Leu		
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Tyr	Cys	Lys	Gln	Phe	Phe	Asn	Arg	His	Cys	Gln	Arg	Gly	Gly	Leu	Leu		
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Gln	Phe	Glu	Ala	Asp	Lys	Thr	Ala	Lys	Glu	Glu	Ser	Leu	Phe	Pro	Val		
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cca	ccc	agc	aag	gag	acc	agt	gct	gag	tcc	caa	gtc	tct	tgg	gcc	cct	624	
Pro	Pro	Ser	Lys	Glu	Thr	Ser	Ala	Glu	Ser	Gln	Val	Ser	Trp	Ala	Pro		
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ggc	agc	ctt	gcc	cag	ttg	ttc	tct	ctg	gac	tct	gtt	cct	ata	cca	caa	672	
Gly	Ser	Leu	Ala	Gln	Leu	Phe	Ser	Leu	Asp	Ser	Val	Pro	Ile	Pro	Gln		
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<213> Homo sapiens

<220>

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<222> 57

<223> Polymorphic amino acid Lys or Arg

<400> 8

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Tyr Gly Glu Gly Gly Asp Ala Tyr Cys Thr Ala Cys Pro Arg Arg
          35          40          45
Tyr Lys Ser Ser Trp Gly His Lys Cys Gln Ser Cys Ile Thr Cys
 50          55          60
Ala Val Ile Asn Arg Val Gln Lys Val Asn Cys Thr Ala Thr Ser Asn
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Ala Val Cys Gly Asp Cys Leu Pro Arg Phe Tyr Arg Lys Thr Arg Ile
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Gly Gly Leu Gln Asp Gln Glu Cys Ile Pro Cys Thr Lys Gln Thr Pro
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Thr Ser Glu Val Gln Cys Ala Phe Gln Leu Ser Leu Val Glu Ala Asp
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Ala Pro Thr Val Pro Pro Gln Glu Ala Thr Leu Val Ala Leu Val Ser
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Ser Leu Leu Val Val Phe Thr Leu Ala Phe Leu Gly Leu Phe Phe Leu
145          150          155          160
Tyr Cys Lys Gln Phe Phe Asn Arg His Cys Gln Arg Gly Gly Leu Leu
          165          170          175
Gln Phe Glu Ala Asp Lys Thr Ala Lys Glu Glu Ser Leu Phe Pro Val
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Pro Pro Ser Lys Glu Thr Ser Ala Glu Ser Gln Val Ser Trp Ala Pro
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          35          40          45

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gct gtc atc aat cgt gtt cag aag gtc aac tgc aca gct acc tct aat   240

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10

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Gly Gly Leu Gln Asp Gln Glu Cys Ile Pro Cys Thr Lys Gln Thr Pro	
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acc tct gag gtt caa tgt gcc ttc cag ttg agc tta gtg gag gca gat	384
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115 120 125	
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Ala Pro Thr Val Pro Pro Gln Glu Ala Thr Leu Val Ala Leu Val Ser	
130 135 140	
agc ctg cta gtg gtg ttt acc ctg gcc ttc ctg ggg ctc ttc ttc ctc	480
Ser Leu Leu Val Val Phe Thr Leu Ala Phe Leu Gly Leu Phe Phe Leu	
145 150 155 160	
tac tgc aag cag ttc ttc aac aga cat tgc cag cgt ggt aag ggt ggc	528
Tyr Cys Lys Gln Phe Phe Asn Arg His Cys Gln Arg Gly Lys Gly Gly	
165 170 175	
tgt ttc atg ttt cac atg aat cag gaa caa ggc tct tat tgg cag aag	576
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Ala Val Ile Asn Arg Val Gln Lys Val Asn Cys Thr Ala Thr Ser Asn	
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Ala Val Cys Gly Asp Cys Leu Pro Arg Phe Tyr Arg Lys Thr Arg Ile	
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Gly Gly Leu Gln Asp Gln Glu Cys Ile Pro Cys Thr Lys Gln Thr Pro	
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Thr Ser Glu Val Gln Cys Ala Phe Gln Leu Ser Leu Val Glu Ala Asp	
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11

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gct gtc tgt ggg gac tgt ttg ccc agg ttc tac cga aag aca cgc att 288
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 85 90 95

gga ggc ctg cag gac caa gag tgc atc ccg tgc acg aag cag acc ccc 336
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 100 105 110

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 130 135 140

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<220>
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 Ala Val Ile Asn Arg Val Gln Lys Val Asn Cys Thr Ala Thr Ser Asn
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13

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 gga ggc ctg cag gac caa gag tgc atc ccg tgc acg aag cag acc ccc 336
 Gly Gly Leu Gln Asp Gln Glu Cys Ile Pro Cys Thr Lys Gln Thr Pro
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<223> Polymorphic amino acid Lys or Arg

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 Ala Val Ile Asn Arg Val Gln Lys Val Asn Cys Thr Ala Thr Ser Asn
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 Ala Val Cys Gly Asp Cys Leu Pro Arg Phe Tyr Arg Lys Thr Arg Ile
 85 90 95
 Gly Gly Leu Gln Asp Gln Glu Cys Ile Pro Cys Thr Lys Gln Thr Pro
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 Thr Ser Glu Val Gln Cys Ala Phe Gln Leu Ser Leu Val Glu Ala Asp
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 Ala Pro Thr Val Pro Pro Gln Glu Ala Thr Leu Val Ala Leu Glu Val
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 Cys Cys Ser Leu Arg Leu Ile Lys Gln Gln Arg Arg Asn Leu Ser Ser

15

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      210                215                220

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<400> 16

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      35              40              45
Tyr Lys Ser Ser Trp Gly His His Arg Cys Gln Ser Cys Ile Thr Cys
      50              55              60
Ala Val Ile Asn Arg Val Gln Lys Val Asn Cys Thr Ala Thr Ser Asn
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Ala Val Cys Gly Asp Cys Leu Pro Arg Phe Tyr Arg Lys Thr Arg Ile
      85              90              95
Gly Gly Leu Gln Asp Gln Glu Cys Ile Pro Cys Thr Lys Gln Thr Pro
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Thr Ser Glu Val Gln Cys Ala Phe Gln Leu Ser Leu Val Glu Ala Asp
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Leu Leu Gln Phe Glu Ala Asp Lys Thr Ala Lys Glu Glu Ser Leu Phe
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Asn Ile Phe Gln Thr Gln Pro Leu Asn Pro Ile Leu Glu Asp Asp Cys
      180             185             190
Ser Ser Thr Ser Gly Phe Pro Thr Gln Glu Ser Phe Thr Met Ala Ser
      195             200             205
Cys Thr Ser Glu Ser His Ser His Trp Val His Ser Pro Ile Glu Cys
      210             215             220
Thr Glu Leu Asp Leu Gln Lys Phe Ser Ser Ser Ala Ser Tyr Thr Gly
      225             230             235             240
Ala Glu Thr Leu Gly Gly Asn Thr Val Glu Ser Thr Gly Asp Arg Leu

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PCT/IB02/03528

16

245

250

255

Glu Leu Asn Val Pro Phe Glu Val Pro Ser Pro
260 265

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Int'l Application No
PCT/IB 02/03528

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER IPC 7 A61K38/17 A61K45/00 G01N33/50 A61P3/00		
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) IPC 7 A61K A61P G01N		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched		
Electronic data base consulted during the International search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used) EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ, BIOSIS, MEDLINE, SEQUENCE SEARCH		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	WO 01 51645 A (GENSET SA.; YEN POTIN FRANCES (US); BIHAIN BERNARD (US); FRUEBIS JO) 19 July 2001 (2001-07-19) claims page 58, line 11 - page 59, line 15	1-6
X	EP 1 033 134 A (OTSUKA PHARMA CO LTD) 6 September 2000 (2000-09-06) page 2, line 44 - line 47	1-6
X	WO 00 68380 A (INCYTE GENOMICS INC; AZIMZAI YALDA (US); YUE HENRY (US); BANDMAN O) 16 November 2000 (2000-11-16) SEQ ID NO 8 page 35, line 17 - page 37, line 5 -/-	1-6
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patent family members are listed in annex.		
* Special categories of cited documents: "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art "A" document member of the same patent family		
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12 November 2002		18/11/2002
Name and mailing address of the ISA European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax (+31-70) 340-3016		Authorized officer
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